

5  
ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE 5D

MAINE SUNDAY TELEGRAM  
12 JUNE 1977

# CIA gets into tour business

By  
Don

early reservations Larrabee  
are advised

WASHINGTON — In three decades as a Washington journalist, I largely accepted the necessity, as well as the secrecy, of the Central Intelligence Agency. I cannot recall placing a telephone call to the CIA for information. I went on the theory that the answer would be "no comment" — so why bother?

For years, the family drove past the CIA headquarters in McLean, Va., about ten minutes from our door, and chuckled knowingly at the sign pointing down an access road to the "Federal Highway Administration" or the "Bureau of Public Roads." We all knew the CIA was lurking down that path but that there wouldn't be any point in driving to the gate.

The secrecy and pseudo-mystery is being lifted, if ever so slightly. I have just come from an authorized tour of the headquarters — a controlled tour, to be sure, and not unlike the one that will be given the general public when the CIA comes out of the cold later this year.

The Washington tourist who makes the proper arrangements in advance with his congressman will not learn any secrets or see any undercover agents darting about on the beautifully-landscaped sylvan setting where the CIA HQ is located. But he ought to come away with a better understanding of what the CIA is all about. He may even decide that the investment — be it \$6 billion or \$10 billion — is worth it.

The vista through the main gate is not unlike that of a private garden community in a resort area, or the campus of a big university — trim lawns and sidewalks with humanity criss-crossing to and from work. It certainly is unlike anything in government.

I was invited by Herb Hetu, a former Navy captain and veteran public relations specialist. When I called him to see if the CIA's new open-ness policy was for real, he said "Sure, come on out." I was cleared at the gate (the sign out front now openly reads "CIA") and directed by a guard to the headquarters building.

BECAUSE I made a wrong turn, I got to see more of the woods and the parking lots and the associated buildings than I had expected. With some help, I found my way back to the hub, a relatively-low level structure, as government buildings go, and one of the better pieces of Federal architecture.

The campus, incidentally, has a power station, miles of drives and parking areas, a water tower and antenna. At the headquarters, I was sent to a reception room to be checked in. There was soft music in the background and quiet activity.

"Basically what we have here is an office building," Hetu explained after I had been escorted to his first floor office. "We will show people the ground floor but the rest is just office."

STAT

Hetu says public tour plans are still in the formative stage, but visits are likely to start with a short orientation film or slides in a small auditorium known as the Bubble. Then the tourists will walk to the main building next door and receive a guided tour of the first floor corridor. There will be maps and exhibits of such things as the photographs taken of Soviet missiles in Cuba during the 1962 missile crisis. The pictures were shot from a balloon. There will be a walk through the library.

The exhibits will be arranged around the long corridors which face the building's inner courtyard filled with magnolia trees. The corridors are presently lined with huge indoor plantings and magnificent modern art on the walls—all on loan from a private collection. The place is tidy and cheerful.

What worries Hetu and his new boss, Admiral Stanfield Turner, is how to handle the crowds that will be clamoring for a look. Relatively few people will be able to get tickets, because tours will be confined to Saturdays when most CIA employees are at home. For both logistical and security reasons, no more than 500 a day will be allowed through. Members of Congress will probably parcel out the tickets, a handful apiece.

"When Admiral Turner took office as director," Hetu said, "he asked for ideas to let the public know a little more, within security bounds. We all came up with suggestions and one of them was for a very controlled tour."

It's a start at least in removing some of the mystique from the CIA which, for most of its employees, is essentially a collection and processing agency. Hundreds of people (the exact figures remain secret) work at desks assembling data collected by CIA operatives and other federal agencies. Others use computers, the information storage and retrieval systems and the library, to interpret the raw data in ways that will be helpful to our national security and our foreign policymakers.

Did you know that the CIA turns out some of the best maps in the world and some of the most extensive background material available anywhere relating to population trends, worldwide weather conditions, crop forecasts? Its analysts look at weather from the standpoint of how it affects a country's economy, its food, supply, and, in turn, its foreign policy, as well as how it affects America.

The building bustles with people who are trained, not as spies, but as accountants, lawyers, computer specialists. Twice a year, some of them produce a National Basic Intelligence Factbook with everything you need to know at a quick glance about every country in the world. It's an unclassified document that anyone can buy.

When President Carter recently referred to the CIA outlook report on the international energy situation through 1985, there was a heavy demand for the document from the news media.

The CIA has scores of reports of this sort which are published on a regular basis and which can be obtained through the Government Printing Office. I saw an agricultural map of the Soviet Union, an atlas of the Indian ocean, a fantastic street guide of Moscow which any tourist would delight in having.

"WHAT WE'RE trying to do," said Hetu, "is to put out more of this unclassified information. Admiral Turner feels the public is paying a lot of money for it and there is probably a great deal of stuff like the energy report that can be published. It's all part of a program we're calling Outreach."

Opening the doors at the CIA, if ever so slightly, isn't likely to tell the public anything they don't know — but